

Review.

“**A** BAPTIST BIBLIOGRAPHY: being a Register of the chief materials for Baptist history, whether in manuscript or in print, preserved in Great Britain, Ireland, and the Colonies. Compiled for the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland by W. T. Whitley, M.A., LL.D., F.R.Hist.S. Vol. i, 1526-1776.”

It is not necessary to be a Baptist to appreciate this laborious and comprehensive work. To every student of Free Church history, or of our National history so far as it relates to the growth of religious freedom, it is simply invaluable; and Dr. Whitley has imposed upon the whole commonwealth of literature a debt which can only be paid by diligent use of the vast and widely scattered treasures to the nature and locations of which he has for the first time furnished an adequate guide. We have here a catalogue, as complete as patient labour could make it, of every known book, pamphlet, or manuscript in the English language that relates to Baptist principles or history, from the early days of the Reformation to the year 1776; and there is promise of a second volume to follow, which will deal with material for Baptist history down to 1837.

The volume now before us contains, roughly speaking, about 4,500 titles, representing 1,700 authors, of whom 920 are Baptists; besides about 370 anonymous pamphlets, state-papers, &c. Of works by Baptist authors the titles are usually given in full; and the same is the case with many others, including most of the anonymous items. Where this appeared unnecessary, or in cases where there is no title—as for example many papers in the Public Record Office—we have a concise statement of the purport of the documents. And frequently a brief note is appended to a title, explaining the circumstances which called forth the book, or the dates of successive reprints, or other matters of interest.

Much thought has evidently been given to the questions of arrangement and reference, so as to facilitate research as much as possible, whether the object in view be the study of a particular author, or a controversy, or a matter of local or general history. The arrangement is, in general, chronological;

books and pamphlets being placed in order of publication, and manuscripts in the order of their origin. It was early recognized that if, for the purpose of an index, the titles were numbered consecutively (as in Dexter's *Bibliography of Congregationalism*), fresh discoveries during the progress of the work might involve an enormous increase of editorial labour. To obviate this difficulty the issues of each year are numbered separately; the date of the year is given in bold type at the top of the page, and the reference number combines the date with the number of the issue. Thus: 3-612, the number of the "Short Declaration of the Mystery of Iniquity," by Thomas Helwys, indicates that this is the *third* publication noticed in the year 1612; and 1-678 shows that the first edition of the *Pilgrim's Progress* is the first book noticed in 1678. A single letter, capital or small as the case may be, suffices to show in which of thirty libraries the book may be found; but press-marks are not given, as these are liable to be changed. Documents in the Public Record office are referred to by their place in the actual volumes from which the calendars were made.

Much information is conveyed by ingenious typographical devices. All names of authors are printed in capitals; names of known Baptists, whether authors or not, in Clarendon type; names of places, if relevant to Baptist church life (but not otherwise) are in small capitals; titles of manuscripts in italics. On many title-pages the author is only designated by initials; wherever these have been satisfactorily interpreted the full name is given, the supplied letters being enclosed in square brackets; and when the authors of anonymous works have been identified, their names in the general list, and their numbers in the index, are likewise enclosed in square brackets. The index also contains many names of persons who were not authors, but who were of importance in Baptist history; the reference-numbers of books in which these are referred to are enclosed in curved brackets.

Care is taken to indicate changes of opinion on the part of several authors. Thus, until 1655 Vavasor Powell appears as a paedobaptist, but the distinctive Baptist type is used in the headlines of his later works. On the other hand Sayer Rudd figures as a Baptist till 1734; the following year plain Roman type begins the story of his tortuous course, via Unitarianism to Conformity. Another point deserving of commendation is the care taken to avoid the antedating of titles on descriptions; thus the writer, in 1608, of "A Letter to Mr.

Smyth and Mr. Robinson, leaders of the Separation at Amsterdam," commonly called "Bishop Hall," is correctly described as "Joseph Hall, vicar of Halstead": he was not bishop till near twenty years later.

Some names conspicuous in the early history of English Nonconformity are missing from the *Bibliography*; and some readers may be surprised to find no mention of Robert Browne, John Greenwood, Henry Barrowe, John Penry, or Martin Marprelate. But the reason is both simple and sufficient; none of these writers were Baptists, neither did they take any part in the Baptist controversy. John Robinson does appear at 1-614 and 2-624, in each case as a defender of the practice of Infant Baptism.

We once heard a sound Protestant say that "he hoped there was such a place as purgatory, for the benefit of authors who publish books without an index." Dr. Whitley need be under no apprehensions on that score. Valuable as the *Bibliography* is, it would fail of more than half of its utility but for the indexes. These are four in number: the first is of Anonymous Pamphlets; the second is of Authors, including pseudonyms and initials, with which Baptist Societies are also grouped; the third is of Places "where Baptist principles were canvassed," among which, beside general references to Wales, Scotland, Ireland, and several American states, we find mention of 305 towns, and no less than sixty-three London congregations; the fourth is of Subjects, under which are grouped references to Catechisms, Confessions of Faith, Education—Elementary, Secondary, and Ministerial, Fifth Monarchy men, Hymns and Singing, Laying on of Hands, Ordination, &c. Among the "Subjects" we find "Continental Anabaptists" and "Mennonites"; we should have been glad to find similar guidance to the literature of some small Baptist coteries at home, such as the Sabbatarians and Johnsonians; but this deficiency is a very small blemish in a work of such wide research and general excellence.

We have detected a few small misprints, which mostly suggest their own correction, and are not in the least likely to mislead even the most careless reader. We confidently expect the same standard of excellence to be maintained in the succeeding volume; and hope that few public or college libraries will be content with the absence from their shelves of a work of reference the utility of which extends far beyond Baptist circles.

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